

God will answer your prayers

When Jesus prayed to his father in humility, faith, and obedience for others, his Father answered. When he prayed for strength and comfort in his hour of greatest need and took upon himself the sins of the world and gave his atoning sacrifice, that upon repentance we could enjoy the miracle of forgiveness, his Father answered.

He is your Father; pray to him. If your life is in disarray and you feel uncomfortable and unworthy to pray because you are not clean, don't worry. He already knows about all of that. He is waiting for you to kneel in humility and take the first few steps. Pray for strength. Pray for others to be led to support you

and guide you and lift you. Pray that the love of the Savior will pour into your heart. Pray that the miracle of the Atonement will bring forgiveness because you are willing to change. I know that those prayers will be answered, for God loves you. His Son gave his life for you. I know they will help you. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Thank you, Elder Scott, for that touching and moving expression. We welcome you most warmly into the new relationship which you will enjoy.

We shall now hear from Sister Michaelene P. Grassli, General President of the Primary Association.

President Michaelene P. Grassli

Spiritual preparation brings peace

Thank you, President Hinckley. Elder Scott, you have touched our hearts, and with our hearts we sustain you.

Seven-year-old Jamie loved her mother dearly. The family had known for nearly a year that their wife and mother was dying of cancer. The father and seven children fasted and prayed; they pled with the Lord to heal her. Everything possible was done for their mother, yet at the end of three painfully difficult months, she passed from this life.

In the first hours following her death, the father brought the grieving family together. After prayer, the children went to their own rooms to prepare for bed. Jamie, who had spent many hours with her mother and was devoted to her, knelt at her own bedside. "Heavenly Father," she prayed through her tears, "we thank thee for the great mom you gave us. We thank thee for helping us try to make her well. Help us to be good so we can live with her again." Without a hint of bitterness, this little seven-year-old girl continued for several minutes in a sweet attitude of peaceful prayer, reflect-

ing her understanding and acceptance of her mother's death.

Jamie was a child at peace. How did she come to that peace? She had been prepared by parents with spiritual understanding. Such preparation brings peace.

Bestow a legacy of peace

I have chosen to speak about our children—precious children of our Heavenly Father throughout the earth. I pray that my message will be received and understood, for these are among the most valiant spirits to come into the world. We can do no less than to bestow on them a legacy of peace.

Our Heavenly Father has promised peace to his children. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (3 Nephi 22:13). Peace in the Lord can give them freedom from self-doubt, freedom from fear, freedom from the confinement of their environment, freedom from enslaving habits. His peace can free them to unfold from the tender buds they are to the mature and fruitful adults they can be.

Just as the fragile bud contains all of the essential elements to develop into a lovely plant or flower, so does each child come to us with the potential for individual self-fulfillment of his eternal destiny. In both instances, in order that what is inside can be fully developed, it must be nurtured from the outside. In nature, plants require light, water, air, and nutrients to thrive. The human spirit thrives on love, knowledge of its origin, and teachings of a spiritual nature. It is important that we provide a favorable environment for spiritual growth and the peace that will accompany it. This peace I speak of will result in quiet assurances even in the midst of worldly pressures and turmoil.

Brothers and sisters, the children need our help. They need us to prepare them. They need us to help them obtain the peace of the Lord. Today is neither too early nor too late to prepare the children, and anyone can do it. A young, new family just beginning; an established family with children of several ages; a family with one parent; grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors; and kind, understanding church leaders and teachers—all of us can teach children of the Lord.

Set a proper example

We begin by teaching what we are. The children need us; they need to see in us what they can become. They need to see us keeping the commandments. We must come unto the Lord and seek for the peace of the gospel in *our own* lives. "Learn of me," the Lord said, "and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me" (D&C 19:23). When we are at peace, then our children can be at peace.

A wise bishop made this observation: "I have seen families where parents are at home with the gospel, where gospel principles are a matter-of-fact, everyday way of life, where parents treat their children with courtesy and respect with the full understanding that they are children of God. In these homes, the children seem to be at peace because their parents have given them a clear message. They know they are children of God. They feel

their worth and have focus to their lives, knowing that eternity is their goal."

To some, a family like the ones described by that bishop may seem impossible to attain. No family is perfect—all families are made up of human beings with mortal weaknesses, who sometimes go astray. But family members, including parents, can begin where they are and learn and grow together.

Meet, pray, and read as a family

Now, we have been promised that family home evening, family prayer, and reading the scriptures together can strengthen and give direction to each member of a family and can knit the family together. If you haven't been having family home evening or family prayer, you may feel awkward about beginning. That's all right. Do it anyway. Gather the family together, tell them that although you haven't been doing so, you want to begin.

Now, I must warn you that Satan will attempt to thwart your efforts because family strength is a threat to his work. So persevere, even though it takes some effort and planning to overcome attitudes and obstacles.

When the family gathers for evening prayer, it is a good time for sharing the day's experiences, reading the scriptures, and sharing testimonies. Children especially need to hear the testimonies of their parents. One family repeats one article of faith every evening for a week, or memorizes a scripture, or recites books in the Book of Mormon. Another family focuses on one child or a parent each day with each member telling something good about that person. It takes just a few minutes. Children of all ages need to hear positive observations about themselves—especially from their parents.

Teach the stories of Jesus

Immerse the children in the stories of Jesus so that they can know him and can imagine what it might have been like to have lived when he was on earth. Tell them how he took the children on his knee

and blessed them and prayed for them. Tell them how the people knew he was the Son of God.

When I was a child I loved to hear about the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Many people heard Jesus was coming to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. They knew he was the Son of God. They went out to meet him. Imagine what it must have been like to be a child in that happy crowd. The scripture says it was "a very great multitude" (Matthew 21:8). They were probably waiting along the narrow streets of Jerusalem becoming more and more excited as they strained to see if he was coming yet. Then as he came into view, riding on a donkey, can't you just hear a great cheer going up? They spread their clothes and tree branches on the ground for the donkey to walk on, like they did for kings, and they waved palm leaves in the air. They cried "Hosanna to the Son of David: . . . Hosanna in the highest" (Matthew 21:9). Oh, wouldn't you love to have been there?

Yes, tell them about the Savior so they'll trust him, so they'll develop a desire to be like him, and want to be with him again. Yes, our homes can provide peace for the children. Blessings be on you parents.

And blessings be on you devoted church leaders who hold the welfare and spiritual growth of children in high priority—priesthood and Primary leaders who minister to the children. At Primary, children are taught of the Lord. A wise stake Primary president in Australia has as her goal that when the children come to Primary, they will feel the Spirit of the Lord. Those will be children at peace.

The Book of Mormon brings peace

President Benson, I'm proud to say that Primary children have this year read and discussed the Book of Mormon. Nine-year-old Matt in Wisconsin spoke in the children's sacrament meeting presentation in his ward recently about something he had learned that brought him peace. He said:

"When my father told our family that we would be moving from Denver to Wisconsin, my mother reminded us of Lehi's family. Like them, I was leaving the only home I had known, all my friends, my school, and my ward. Luckily we got to bring all our possessions with us, though they were in storage for three months, and we missed having a house and our 'precious things.'

"My mother reminded us of how Nephi accepted this challenge—willingly—knowing that the Lord would 'prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.'

"I have learned that I can do without things, but not without my family. My brothers and sisters and I have tried to be more like Nephi than his complaining brothers. I am grateful for the things that the Book of Mormon teaches us."

Yes, when children are taught of the Lord, we bestow on them a gift, a legacy of peace, that can lead them to eternal life. We must not fail them.

May all our children have the blessing to be taught of the Lord that they might be, indeed, children at peace. I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "All That Dwell below the Skies" without announcement.

President Hinckley

Does anyone doubt that the Primary is in good hands? Thank you, Sister Grassli, for your statement concerning peace in the lives of children.

The choir has sung "All That Dwell below the Skies." The choir and congregation will now join together in singing "The Spirit of God." Following that, Elder Wm. Grant Bangerter, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak to us.

The choir and congregation sang "The Spirit of God."